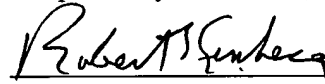


REMARKS

This Preliminary Amendment is made to eliminate multiple claim dependency. The drawing descriptions have been added to supplement the brief description of the drawings with descriptions of Figs. 9-11 and to eliminate multiple claim dependency. A marked up version showing the changes made to the claims is attached.

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Respectfully submitted,



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VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE

Claim 13. (Amended) The fusion protein according to claim 12, wherein the protein acting as a sensor of extracellular sodium ion level is [the protein according to claims 10 or 11] comprised of an amino acid sequence shown in Seq. ID No. 3.

Claim 15. (Amended) The antibody according to claim 14, wherein the protein acting as a sensor of extracellular sodium ion level is [the protein according to claims 10 or 11] comprised of an amino acid sequence shown in Seq. ID No. 3.

Claim 16. (Amended) The antibody according to claim[s] 14 [or 15], wherein the antibody is a monoclonal antibody.

Claim 18. (Amended) The host cell according to claim 17, wherein the protein acting as a sensor of extracellular sodium ion level is [the protein according to claims 10 or 11] comprised of an amino acid sequence show in Seq. ID No. 3.

Claim 20. (Amended) The transgenic non-human animal according to claim[s] 19 [or 20], wherein the protein acting as a sensor of extracellular sodium ion level is [the protein according to claims 10 or 11] comprised of an amino acid sequence shown in Seq. ID No. 3.

Claim 21. (Amended) The transgenic non-human animal according to claim[s] 19 [or 20], wherein the non-human animal is a mouse or a rat.

Claim 23. (Amended) The method of screening a material that promotes or suppresses the function or the expression of a protein acting as a sensor of extracellular sodium ion level according to claim 22, wherein the cell that expresses a protein acting as a sensor of extracellular sodium ion level is the host cell [according to claims 17 or 18] which contains an expression system that can express a protein acting as a sensor of extracellular sodium ion level.

Claim 24. (Amended) A method of screening a material that promotes or suppresses the function

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or the expression of a protein acting as a sensor of extracellular sodium ion level characterized in using the non-human animal according to [any one of]claim[s] 1 [to 4 or the non-human animal according to any one of claims 19 to 21],and a subject material.

Claim 25. (Amended) A material that promotes or suppresses the function or the expression of a protein acting as a sensor of extracellular sodium ion level characterized in being available through the screening method according to [any one of] claim[s] 22[to 24].

Claim 26. (Amended) A medical compound used for curing patients who need promotion of the function or enhancement of the expression of a protein acting as a sensor of extracellular sodium ion level, and containing the protein according to [any one of]claim[s] 9 [to 11 or the material that promotes the function or the expression of a protein acting as a sensor of extracellular sodium ion level according to claim 25] as its effective components.

Claim 27. (Amended) A medical compound used for curing patients who need suppression of the function or the expression of a protein acting as a sensor of extracellular sodium ion level, and containing the protein according to [any one of] claim[s] 9[to 11 or the material that supresses the function or the expression of a protein acting as a sensor of extracellular sodium ion level according to claim 25] as its effective components.

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